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**STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN JOEL HEFLEY  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON MILITARY INSTALLATIONS AND FACILITIES**

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**NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2001  
DIVISION B—MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AUTHORIZATIONS**

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The Subcommittee on Military Installations and Facilities met last week to consider the authorizations for the military construction and military family housing programs of the Department of Defense for fiscal year 2001 and related items.

In one very important respect, the budget request was a marked improvement over the submission made by the Department one year ago. The Department of Defense heeded the overwhelming rejection by the Congress of outlay rate-based incremental funding. Unfortunately, this year's budget request continued the broad trend that began with the fiscal year 1996 MILCON program. The Department of Defense requested fewer total dollars for these key infrastructure accounts than was enacted by the Congress the year before. The Department's budget request of \$8.03 billion for the MILCON program was 4 percent below current spending levels and 5.5 percent below the levels authorized for appropriations in the current fiscal year. More significantly, the budget request was 25 percent below the funding level requested by the Department for fiscal year 1996 when I assumed the chairmanship of this subcommittee.

While the Department of Defense has consistently underfunded the military construction and military family housing programs, this committee has played a key, bipartisan role in addressing the needs of military personnel and their families. I am especially proud of the commitment of the membership to acquire decent housing, improved child development centers, and other quality-of-life improvements for those who volunteer in our defense. We have also worked very hard to improve facilities supporting military training and readiness and have provided for necessary withdrawals of the public lands to allow the military services to train and to be ready to fight the Nation's wars. I want to express my appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, for your steadfast efforts to increase the defense budget and your willingness to support significant improvements in the MILCON program over the years.

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Mr. Chairman, the subcommittee's recommendations would, if adopted, continue our efforts both to provide additional investment in military infrastructure and to continue innovation in facilities acquisition and management. Our recommendations would commit approximately \$8.43 billion to the military construction and military family housing programs for the coming fiscal year. Although we all would prefer to do more, we recognize the imperative to balance the unmet needs in the infrastructure arena with the additional and growing list of unfunded modernization, readiness, and personnel requirements confronting the military services.

In closing, I want to express again my appreciation to the members of the subcommittee, especially the ranking member, Gene Taylor, who have contributed to our work this session. This is truly a bipartisan effort and I urge all members to join in support of this legislation.

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